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U.S. proposal: Fallout shelters for officials only

By Fred Hiatt
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WEAPONS*

WASHINGTON — The Reagan administration, which five years ago proposed massive evacuations from cities in the event of nuclear attack, is considering a revised plan that would shelter state and local

officials while encouraging the rest of the population to rely on "self-help."

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has drafted a \$1.5 billion plan to build 600 bomb shelters for local officials between 1988 and 1992, according to internal FEMA

documents. The proposal is being reviewed by other agencies, including the Defense Department and Office of Management and Budget, FEMA officials said.

The shelters would enable local governments to manage "the trans-attack period" and

restore "post-attack government and society," a FEMA document said. Eventually, 3,400 shelters would be built, at unspecified cost.

The shelters would also protect land records so that nucle-

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ar war survivors can "retain and demonstrate ownership" of property that is not destroyed, Samuel W. Speck, associate FEMA director, said in a telephone interview yesterday.

At the same time, "the program recognizes the need for citizens to assume greater responsibility for their survival protection," the FEMA proposal states. Referring to the millions of civil-defense volunteers in the 1950s, the plan calls for dissemination of 3.8 million low-cost radiation detectors and "instructional materials adaptable for use by families, schools, churches" and others.

States and local communi-

ties that refuse to prepare for nuclear attack in this way could lose federal funds for other emergencies, such as hurricanes and earthquakes, according to FEMA Director Julius W. Becton Jr.

Sen. William Proxmire, D-Wis., who made some documents available to The Washington Post, wrote in a May 8 letter to Becton that the FEMA plan "appears similar to the Soviet civil-defense system that protects its government and (Communist) party elite." Proxmire said the plan resembles the civil-defense program of the 1950s, which "was considered by many to be ridiculously unrealistic."